PASEK MICHAEL S
79 GEORGETOWN 3776

(172)

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ACTION ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 E-01 SS-15 NSCT-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PA-01 JUSE-00 TRSE-00 SCS-00 CA-01 MCT-02
INR-10 INRE-00 SY-05 USSS-00 AID-05 SYE-00 CCO-00
/042 W

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY John Simms DATE 2-27-81
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☑
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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 8063
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AMBASSADOR SENDS
E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: CASC, OREP (RYAN LEO) GY
SUBJ: CODEL RYAN: SHOOTING INCIDENT AT PORT KAITUMA.
REF: GEORGETOWN 3774.

1. I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A MEETING WITH PRIMIN BURNHAM, DEPUTY PRIMIN REID, FORMIN JACKSON, AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION SHIRLEY FIELD-RIDLEY. VARIOUS OFFICERS OF THE GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE WERE ALSO IN ATTENDANCE. CREWS OF THE TWO CHARTER AIRCRAFT WHICH HAD BEEN SHOT AT DURING THE INCIDENT AT PORT KAITUMA HAD JUST ARRIVED AND WERE ALSO PRESENT. FOLLOWING RECONSTRUCTION OF INCIDENT IS BASED ON THEIR TESTIMONY WHICH MUST BE USED CAREFULLY IN VIEW OF THEIR UNDERSTANDABLY EMOTIONAL STATE.

2. BOTH CHARTER AIRCRAFT HAD ARRIVED AT PORT KAITUMA AND HAD COMMENCED LOADING CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S PARTY. THE SMALLER OF THE TWO, A FIVE-PASSENGER CESSNA, HAD ALREADY LOADED APPARENTLY, WITH AT LEAST TWO OR THREE OF THE JONESTOWN RESIDENTS WHO HAD ELECTED TO LEAVE THE COMMUNITY WITH

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CONGRESSMAN RYAN, AMONG ITS FIVE PASSENGERS. ACCORDING TO THE PILOT ONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS PRODUCED A PISTON AND BEGAN FIRING WITHIN THE AIRCRAFT AT THE OTHER PASSENGERS. AT ALMOST THE SAME TIME A TRACTOR PULLING A CART APPEARED ON THE SCENE. THE CART WAS LOADED WITH SEVERAL PEOPLE AND WHEN IT APPROACHED THE AIRCRAFT THE INDIVIDUALS IN THE CART BEGAN FIRING AT THE CLUSTER OF PEOPLE WHO HAD NOT YET BOARDED THE SECOND LARGER AIRCRAFT. SEVERAL OF THE PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO THE PILOTS, WERE IMMEDIATELY STRUCK BY BULLETS AND IT THEIR ESTIMATION WERE KILLED DURING THE FIRST FUSILLADE. THIS GROUP INCLUDED CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND MEMBERS OF THE NBC CAMERA TEAM. THE FIRING ALSO DAMAGED THE ENGINES OF THE SECOND AIRCRAFT AND RENDERED IT UNFLYABLE. PEOPLE STILL ON THE GROUND WHO WERE NOT WOUNDED OR WERE WOUNDED AND AMBULATORY RAN INTO THE BUSHES SURROUNDING THE AIRSTRIP TO ESCAPE THE FIRE. THE THREE-MAN CREW IN THE DISABLED

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AIRCRAFT SCRAMBLED ABOARD THE CESSNA WHICH WAS TAXI-
ING DOWN THE RUNWAY. THIS AIRCRAFT MANAGED TO TAKE OFF WITH
BOTH CREWS PLUS ONE WOUNDED PASSENGER WHO APPARENTLY
WAS ONE OF THE PERSONS WHO HAD ELECTED TO LEAVE
GEORGETOWN. (SHE IS NOW IN A HOSPITAL IN GEORGETOWN.)
3. NEITHER CREW HAD ANY GREAT FAMILIARITY WITH THE
INDIVIDUAL PASSENGERS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE
CONGRESSMAN, THE NBC CAMERA TEAM AND THE DCM AND THUS COULD NOT
READILY IDENTIFY CASUALTIES. THEY
DID REPORT, HOWEVER, THAT WHEN THEY LEFT PORT KAITUMA
THE DCM SEEMED TO BE AMBULATORY BUT PERHAPS SLIGHTLY
WOUNDED. THE CONGRESSMAN AND THE CAMERA TEAM APPEARED TO
BE DEAD.
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4. AFTER THE MEETING WITH THE PRIMIN THE AIR
CREWS WERE TAKEN IN CHARGE BY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
FOR A MORE INTENSIVE DEFRIEFING. I HAVE SENT AN EMBASSY
POLITICAL OFFICER TO BE PRESENT AT THIS SESSION.
5. UNITS OF THE GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE AND THE POLICE
ARE BEING AIRLIFTED DURING NIGHT HOURS TO MATTHEWS RIDGE.
THE CLOSEST AIRSTRIP CAPABLE OF TAKING AIRCRAFT AFTER
DARK. GDF IS ALSO POSITIONING TOW HELICOPTERS AT
MATTHEWS RIDGE IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO SHUTTLE TROOPS
INTO PORT KAITUMA AT FIRST LIGHT. THERE IS ALREADY A
SMALL GDF UNIT AT PORT KAITUMA NUMBERING PERHAPS NO
MORE THAN SIX. AS OF NOW THERE IS NO COMMUNICATION LINK
WITH PORT KAITUMA.
6. THE PRIMINISTER EXPRESSED HIS DEEP REGRET OVER THIS
TRAGIC INCIDENT AND WISHED THIS TO BE CONVEYED URGENTLY TO USG.
HE NOTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN
MOST FACILITATIVE REGARDING THE CODEL'S VISIT.
7. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERNS
WERE AS FOLLOWS: (1) THAT THE GOG MAKE EVERY EFFORT
TO GET INTO PORT KAITUMA TO FURNISH AID, ASSISTANCE AND
PROTECTION TO THE AMERICANS WHO WERE STILL THERE.
(2) THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE BODIES OF THE DEAD SHOULD
BE BROUGHT TO GEORGETOWN, AND (3) THAT THE
PERPETRATORS OF THIS OUTRAGE BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE.
8. I LEFT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AT THIS POINT
AND RETURNED TO THE EMBASSY.
9. WE HAVE ALSO LEARNED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN THREE
MURDERS AND ONE SUICIDE AT THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE OFFICE
IN GEORGETOWN. BURKE
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